

TESTIMONY OF

*THE CONNECTICUT MESSENGER COURIER ASSOCIATION
THE CONNECTICUT COALITION OF PROPERTY OWNERS
THE GREATER DANBURY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
THE LUMBER DEALERS' ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT
THE MILFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
THE NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE*

BEFORE THE
LEGISLATURE'S LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
30:00 PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2009
ROOM 2B, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Good morning. My name is Marshall R. Collins. I am appearing in my capacity as Counsel for Government Relations for the aforementioned six organizations (the "Organizations"). Collectively they represent more than 4,000 employers of approximately 130,000 men and women in Connecticut.

SB 710 AAC Updates To The Family And Medical Leave Act. This proposal appears to make reasonable changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow family members additional time to care for injured soldiers. The Organizations do not oppose the changes.

SB 714 AAC Retaliation For Use Of Paid Sick Leave. The Organizations cannot support this proposal. The use in Section 1(a) of overly broad and unclear language such as "or in any manner discriminate ..." is a trap for the unsophisticated employer. When deciding where to locate, grow or maintain operations, employers will be less likely to choose Connecticut and to subject themselves to such unnecessary exposure.

SB 715 AA Requiring Employers To Cite A Reason For Termination Of Their Employees. This proposal would subject employers to \$300 fines for not giving written reasons for terminating an employee. This would place an additional and unnecessary burden on employers. It is one more unnecessary and anticompetitive measure that would make Connecticut a less desirable place to do business. The Organizations oppose this proposal.

SB 711 AAC The Elimination Of State Financial Assistance for Companies That Reduce Retirement Benefits. This proposal would subject struggling companies to penalties in the event that they had to take difficult but necessary actions to survive. No company that wishes to attract good employees needs to be told that it should not reduce retirement benefits. However, when a company is fighting to survive in these extraordinarily difficult economic times, such reduction might be one of the few options to bankruptcy or closure. To penalize companies which have received loans, grants, guarantees or tax abatements from the State of Connecticut, that make such a decision, virtually amounts to beating the proverbial "dead horse." Passage of this measure would send a worldwide message that Connecticut is not a good place to do business.

While **SB 710** appears to be a reasonable attempt to assist those who have served their country, collectively, **Senate Bills 711, 714 and 715** send a powerful negative message. The message is that Connecticut is a not a good place to do business in these difficult economic times. The provisions of these three proposals are unnecessary. Consequently, the Organizations oppose their passage.

This completes my testimony. Thank you for your consideration.